That which I consider to be an indispensable accompaniment to the provision of time and opportunity for reflection, is "a complete seclusion from all those characters who, by precept or example, might interfere in each other's reformation." It is, then, for us to find out *that* species of discipline which will embrace the objects I have enumerated, and which will combine not only the punishment of the offender, but also assist in every possible manner in his ultimate, if not his immediate, reformation. It is unnecessary to dwell, at any considerable length, upon the pernicious results arising from evil company and bad example; and as man, in his intercourse through life, is continually exposed to temptation, let his sojourn in a prison be calculated to enable him to resist the allurements of vice when his term of confinement shall have elapsed, and let him return to the world a better man than when first he entered his cell. It is against reason to expect that a man who has been tempted, or, perhaps, in a great measure forced, to sin, by dissolute companions, will, while under the influence of their precepts, make the slightest advances towards a reformation: and therefore it is absolutely necessary that a species of discipline be adopted, which will prevent the possibility of such communication taking place.

It is almost unnecessary for me to say (as it can be easily concluded from the preceding observations), that I am a strict advocate for the maintenance of the *separate system*; and though prejudices have been cast upon the public mind as to its influences, by the erroneous opinions of authors, who have either taken an unfair view of them, or have not given themselves the trouble to inquire into the results produced by its observance, but have taken particular care to point out defects which existed only in their own imagination,—it has been advanced that, on first viewing the principles of the separate system, humanity becomes affected by the means employed in carrying them out; but it is only in consequence of the mind being uninitiated in the beneficial results arising from their practice, and never for a moment taking those into consideration, but solely depending and giving its opinion on the effect produced upon its own nature, that this hasty conclusion is come to. There are many who consider that one of the principal advantages to be derived from the *silent system* (as opposed to the separate system), is, that the prisoners have the consolation of seeing each other. Now, I have already said sufficient, with respect to the detriment which arises from bad company, to render any further comment unnecessary; but those who admit that such communication is advantageous, in my opinion, advocate a doctrine which is contrary to all reason and common sense. Another defect which is very manifest in this system is, the opportunities which are offered prisoners of committing breaches of discipline. I have heard it said that the great vigilance of the officers who enforce the observance of this system, prevents the chance of any intercourse taking place between the prisoners; but it is my firm conviction that, no matter how great the watch that may be kept upon them, or however efficient the officers may be to discharge their duty, they will, notwithstanding, find means to explain to one another their sentiments. A look, a gesture, a motion of the hand, will frequently convey feelings which the tongue dares not utter. It must, then, follow as a matter of course, that detection and punishment are the immediate results of a violation of the prison laws. Now, how much better would it be to prevent all possibility of such being the case, than to throw a man in the way of temptation, and punish him for indulging in it. It would appear to me that, to carry out this system to any proper extent, the workshops of the prison should be constructed on the same principle as a *whispering gallery*, so as to reverberate the least sound distinctly; for it is impossible that any human ear, without artificial aid, could detect the whispers among a number of prisoners in a large room. I could enumerate many other deficiencies which are obvious in this system, but as too minute an examination into its principles might be considered irrelevant to the purposes of my essay, I shall merely content myself with making such remarks as are necessary for my subject.

Let us now take a glance at the principles on which the separate system is conducted; and having compared the one with the other, I shall then leave the subject to my readers' discrimination, to draw their own conclusions. The prisoner inhabits an airy, well-ventilated cell, he is supplied with whatever machines and implements are suitable to his trade,—or, if he has never applied himself to any, he is taught one; he is permitted to have pens, ink, paper, and books (particularly those which are calculated to improve his mind and inspire within him a sorrow for the past, a solace for the present, and resolutions of amendment for the future. He is visited daily by the governor or his deputy, he receives comfort from the spiritual advice of the chaplain, he is permitted to have free communication and opportunities of intercourse with the officers of the prison, occasionally his friends are admitted to see him, he is allowed a sufficient quantity of air and exercise, recompensed for the amount of his labour,—and, in a word, he is provided with everything necessary for existence. It is only by contrast we can judge impartially, and I cannot understand how any man, giving the subject proper consideration, can declare himself to be an enemy to a system which is based on principles that are the very foundation of everything that is calculated to bring a man to a proper sense of his duty, both spiritually and temporally.

The prison in Philadelphia is constructed for the observance of the separate system, but there is one very manifest defect in it, which I cannot but notice. On the principal story, small narrow yards are attached to the cells—of course intended for the recreation of the prisoners. Now, for two reasons this should be objected to. In the first place, it prevents his inspection by the officers; and, in the second, it must prove detrimental to his health, as it is necessary to be observed that they should be detached from the main building, and constructed so as to admit a thorough current of air to pass through them: and I also find that, on the other stories, in order to compensate for the want of the yard, two cells are allowed to each prisoner. However pernicious the first defect may be to which I have referred, *this*, I do not hesitate for a moment to say, is doubly so.

There are no structures which require more precautions to be taken for the preservation of the health of the inmates, than "prisons," and there is a great responsibility thrown upon the architect to make such provision as will enable the governor and his officers to carry out the system, without affecting the health of those under their charge. As the mental faculties of every human being are more or less influenced by the state of his health, it is of very important consequence that the physical, as well as the moral benefit of the prisoner, should be attended to. The first advance towards this object should be in the selection of a site whereon to erect the building, and to this point too much consideration cannot be given. We are frequently afforded examples of malignant distempers breaking out and spreading to a fearful extent in prisons, and hurrying immense numbers of the unfortunate inmates to a premature grave; and these results have been too often found to arise from a previous inattention to healthful principles, in constructing the buildings in low, damp situations, exposed to the injurious effects of fogs, or in the neighbourhood of stagnant water. However destructive such inattention may be in the erection of other structures, it is doubly so in a prison, when we take into consideration that its inhabitants must perpetually suffer from its influences, and are denied the possibility of refreshing themselves by inhaling the pure atmosphere beyond its walls.*

J. J. L.

Dublin.

Exposition of Manufactures in Birmingham.—A committee has been appointed to arrange an exposition of local manufactures, on the occasion of the visit of the British Association to this town in September next. We trust the endeavour will meet with the earnest co-operation of the manufacturers.

* To be continued.

THE GAS MOVEMENT.

METROPOLITAN AND PROVINCIAL.

While of late recording the wondrous alacrity and zeal with which (on the eve of certain city elections, we believe) the majority of the City Sewers Commissioners were advocating the city gas-consumers' interests, and determining, with the aid of half a million of money, to extinguish all monopoly of gas within the city bounds for ever,—by a slight misgiving as to the somewhat suspicious intensity of that zeal, and even while giving, as in courtesy bound, to those who displayed so much of it, all due credit (more, it now appears, than all the credit really due), for its sincerity, we were induced just gently to hint, that "the city gas-consumers seemed to be somewhat suspicious of the permanence of the good intentions of the authorities." Now, it only remains for us, as in equal courtesy bound, to compliment "the city gas-consumers" on the perspicacity of their suspicions, and the depth of their sagacity. They were clearly far too old and experienced "birds of a feather" either to be caught with chaff, or entrapped by those "good intentions" with which Guildhall was at that time paved; and they hence resolved not to leave their good and hopeful cause entirely in the hands of such ticklish paviours. The City Sewers Commission has, in fact, eaten in its own wordy vapouring "bill," without even choaking on the tail of it. By a majority of 19 to 7, all its determinations and protestations have suddenly vanished in the cool *resolution*, "that no further proceedings be taken in prosecuting this bill." The few staunch and consistent supporters of previous resolutions, now in the minority, "were extremely indignant," as well they might, "after the infinite pains taken by the corporation to accomplish a reduction in the exorbitant price of so necessary an article." A trick such as this may be played but once, and may be played moreover at rather too high a stake. As to those, however, who can scarcely be said to have been betrayed, since they never really trusted, we doubt not they will go on with energy and resolution, increased, in place of diminished, by an act of self-stultification so complete.——A "Plain Statement" was lately addressed to these commissioners, by a "Director of one of the Metropolitan Gas Companies,"—doubtless a city one, reciting a few of the fusty old fallacious arguments in favour of monopoly and high prices, arguments which might have been urged, with equal ineptitude, years since, while prices were double what they even already are. But "One of the Commissioners of Sewers for the City" (of course, one of the staunch seven), has thought it advisable to publish "An Examination of the 'Plain Statement,'" in which he good-humouredly, but efficiently, knocks the director off his wooden pegs. It is needless for us, however, 'at this time of day,' to enter further into either 'Statement' or 'Examination.' Nor shall we deign even to fence with another 'Statement' which the alarmed monopolists have profusely showered over all the walls, in at least one extensive district of the metropolis. All we need do is to refer to The Builder's "Indices," under head of "Gas Movement," &c., for the last few years.——On the 12th of February last, under head of "Gas in Guernsey," we made an assault on the stronghold of gas monopoly there, and endeavoured to point out to the gas proprietor (a resident in the metropolis by the way), the impracticability of such a price as 12s. per 1,000 cubic feet, and the folly, therefore, of persisting in the attempt to profit by sustaining it. The *Guernsey Sun* had also called the attention of the Guernsey gas consumers—or would-be gas consumers rather—to our disinterested efforts in the cause of cheap, good, and abundant gas-light. The subject, it appears, continued thereafter to ferment, until the proprietor has at length been induced to promise a reduction of 2s. per 1,000 feet; but, foolishly for himself, postpones the reduction till a time when the consumers altogether cease from using their expensive gas for six months longer. Doubtless the proprietor calculates on thus diminishing the chance of competition (threatened at a further reduction of 3s. per 1,000) in the mistaken idea that he is putting off an *evil* day, while he is only tampering with his own best interests;

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